

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REINTRODUCTION OF THE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF THE LAST DAY OF FEBRUARY EACH YEAR AS "RARE DISEASE DAY"

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce this resolution with my colleague Rep. RICHARD HUDSON of North Carolina. Our resolution supports the designation of Rare Disease Day on the last day of February. I am pleased that this resolution has been endorsed by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and am thankful for their leadership on these critical issues over many years.

Nearly one in ten Americans live with one or more of the roughly 7,000 known rare diseases. More than half of those struggling with rare diseases—defined as affecting less than 200,000 people—are children. Sadly, many rare diseases and conditions are serious, life-threatening, and lack effective treatments. These are not just statistics: I am sure most of us know at least one family member or friend who has been affected by or struggled with the unique challenges of rare diseases.

Moreover, as we observe Black History Month, it's important to know that African Americans and other minorities are especially vulnerable to rare diseases, including Sickle Cell Anemia and Sarcoidosis. These diseases and conditions—including Thalassemia and Hereditary ATTR (hATTR) amyloidosis—disproportionately affect African Americans. Despite these unique obstacles, African Americans have an inspiring tradition of both combatting rare diseases and improving medical science.

One great example is Dr. Charles Drew, an African American scientist who helped found the modern "blood bank," which helped dramatically expand blood transfusions. A faculty member at Howard University, Dr. Drew's pioneering work in blood transfusions took place against the backdrop of segregation and discrimination. During his time overseeing the Red Cross's blood plasma donation program, Dr. Drew was prohibited from donating his own blood because of the color of his skin. Despite these obstacles, Dr. Drew's work improved the practice of blood transfusions, which is now a lifeline for many individuals struggling today with rare diseases. The examples of Dr. Drew and countless other researchers, physicians, nurses, activists, and patients underscore the importance of bringing additional awareness to rare diseases.

Despite the many challenges, some progress has been made. More than 840 drugs and biologics have been approached by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of rare diseases. However, Congress must do more to combat rare diseases. In addition, more work needs to be done to

bring attention to the needs of those who struggle with rare diseases, and to celebrate their courage. That's why Rep. HUDSON and I are reintroducing this important resolution. Each year, many individuals with rare diseases and their loved ones celebrate Rare Disease Day to share their stories and educate communities of researchers, health professionals, governments, and community organizations about how rare diseases affect them.

More than 100 countries observe Rare Disease Day. Our resolution expresses support for the designation of the last day of this month as Rare Disease Day. Congress should recognize this work and improve our efforts to address the challenges facing the rare disease patient community.

Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join us in supporting Rare Disease Day's designation on the last day of February to better champion people with rare diseases. I urge the House to support this resolution.

RECOGNIZING TAMPA'S LOCAL TRAILBLAZER, ROOSEVELT "ROCKY" RATLIFF, III, IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, this Black History Month, I am proud to celebrate local trailblazers who have dedicated their lives to lifting up our community. I rise today in immense gratitude of Roosevelt "Rocky" Ratliff, III, a lifetime public servant. Born in Perry, Fla., at 2 pounds and 11 ounces, he gained the name Rocky by his delivery nurse because he was a fighter, despite his low birthweight. His parents, Roosevelt Jr. and Gloria, taught him that hard work and doing your very best in everything you do pays off. He moved to Tampa in 1984 and received his bachelor's degree in criminology from St. Leo University—becoming the first in his family to attain a college degree. He also attended Bethune Cookman University, where he was a member of the Marching Wildcats Band.

Mr. Ratliff joined the Tampa Police Department in 1998, patrolling the seven public housing properties that existed at the time. He led with his "Boots on the Ground" philosophy that stressed the importance of patrolling neighborhoods on foot to deter crime and foster invaluable relationships with the neighbors. This philosophy helped him work his way up the ranks to corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain before retiring as a major in 2018. He had a reputation for building strong community relationships throughout the City of Tampa. Because of his initiative, our communities became a safer place to live, work and play.

Major Ratliff pioneered the Community Oriented Program (COPs) in all three Districts and helped resolve community complaints and

disturbances in city parks by serving as the liaison to the Parks & Recreation Department. After 30 years, Major Ratliff retired but continued his community involvement through mentoring. He is a member of the Pi Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. that started a mentoring program at Just Elementary School for 20 young men in the fourth and fifth grades called the Gentlemen's Club. This program is vital in helping young men develop the proper skills needed to guide them throughout life and furthering their education. In addition, he is CEO of Strategic Community Engagement Consulting, LLC. He, along with Derrick Brooks Charities, developed a Community-Police Relationships (CPR) Zoom Forum to focus on addressing concerns between law enforcement and our Black and Brown communities. The Forum has been a major success throughout Florida. For decades, City of Tampa and Hillsborough County employees supported an annual local MLK tribute through a scholarship fund and downtown march, and Major Ratliff was part of that effort during his tenure at the Tampa Police Department. In 2018, he became a member of the MLK Parade Foundation. Today, the MLK Foundation hosts one of the largest MLK parades in the southeastern United States and engages with businesses, community organizations and entertainment—over the past few years, numerous bands from Historically Black Colleges & Universities have participated in the annual parade. In fact, 2022 was the first time ever that the largest HBCU bands in the country, Florida's own Bethune Cookman University and Florida A&M University, marched together.

Major Ratliff is married to Antoinette and is the proud father to four daughters, Tyrhonza, Bianca, Asia and Markayla.

Major Ratliff has always answered the call—the call to keep our community safe and the call to preserve our community's African American history. Madam Speaker, on behalf of a grateful nation and Tampa Bay community, I am proud to recognize the service and leadership of Major Roosevelt "Rocky" Ratliff, III.

COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS OF THE SUMGAIT AND BAKU Pogroms

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the 34th anniversary of the pogrom against the Armenian residents of the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan.

On February 27, 1988, and for three days following, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians—leaving hundreds of civilians dead and injured and women and girls were raped. Some victims were thrown from windows and burned alive. Tens of thousands were forced to flee.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

After two years, it was estimated that only 40,000 of the 250,000 Armenian residents of Baku remained in Azerbaijan. On January 13, 1990, organized Azerbaijani mobs turned on them, too, killing hundreds and injuring many more.

The pogroms came as a direct result of years of vicious, racist anti-Armenian propaganda by Azerbaijani authorities, dehumanizing the Armenian residents of Azerbaijan and laying the groundwork for mass violence. Azerbaijani authorities made little effort to punish those responsible, instead attempting to cover up the atrocities and deny the government's role in instigating the attacks.

On such an anniversary, we honor the victims of this ghastly injustice, and pledge to speak out against hatred so that history will not repeat itself. But tragically, more than three decades later, that is exactly what has happened. Beginning on September 27, 2020, and over 44 days, Azerbaijani forces once again targeted and murdered innocent Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Artsakh, and displaced tens of thousands more. Today, Azerbaijani aggression against the people of Armenia and Artsakh continues. Armenian soldiers are still illegally detained and subject to torture while thousands of civilians still live in danger. Religious and cultural Armenian sites that have fallen under Azerbaijani control are under constant threat.

These are the horrific consequences when aggression and hatred grow unchecked—and it is why, whether these crimes against humanity occurred one year, thirty years, or a hundred years ago, we can never allow them to go unrecognized. More than that, it is why the United States must fully step into its role as a defender of democracy and peace around the world. We must not relent in our calls for the safe and unconditional release of the remaining Armenian prisoners of war and captured civilians, for the end of U.S. assistance to the Aliyev regime, and for stronger efforts to support democracy in Armenia and a free, independent Artsakh.

So on this tragic anniversary, let us pause to remember those who suffered in the atrocities of the Sumgait and Baku pogroms. But let us also recommit ourselves and our nation to doing everything we can, today, to bring liberation to our Armenian brothers and sisters abroad, once and for all.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF JAMES CAPONITI

HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my remarkable constituents, James Caponiti, on the occasion of his retirement from the American Maritime Congress and for his unwavering service of nearly half a century to the U.S. Merchant Marine.

James' multi-decade career spans an extraordinary period which he began as a newly minted analyst at the Department of Commerce and which he concluded as Acting Deputy Administrator of the Maritime Administration. From the Nixon administration to navigating today's challenges of declining U.S. shipping, James worked to bolster the U.S.

Merchant Marine's invaluable role in upholding our national security interests. For example, when he served as a Commerce Fellow on the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, James provided instrumental insight and guidance in crafting legislation that implemented the Maritime Security Program. As the Chairman of NATO's Planning Board for Shipping, he led efforts that emphasized the immense value of a robust domestic merchant fleet to our European allies.

He also served as the Executive Director and President of the American Maritime Congress, a non-profit and research education association dedicated to supporting the U.S. Merchant Marine. As Executive Director and President, James provided over 38 years of industry knowledge in showcasing the important nature of maritime services to policy staff in Congress and the White House. He also spearheaded efforts to revitalize the U.S. fleet, increase the share of food-aid required on U.S. flagged vessels, educate shareholders on Export-Import Bank mandates, expand diversity and inclusion within the U.S. Merchant Marine and promote sustainability efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change.

James faithfully dedicated himself to the best interests of his country. His unshakable commitment to improving the quality of life of all mariners and strengthening the security interests of our country embodies true American patriotism.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the remarkable service and wonderful legacy of my constituent, James Caponiti.

RECOGNIZING MONA GARIMELLA, BLACK HISTORY MONTH ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2022

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the exemplary work of Mona Garimella, an 11th grade student at Maggie Walker Governor's School in Richmond, Virginia, and the high school winner of the Black History Month essay contest I hosted earlier this month. Ms. Garimella wrote a powerful essay on the legacy of my former colleague, John Lewis, and the importance of getting into "good trouble." I am inspired by Ms. Garimella's words, and I encourage young people across our country to reflect on what this month means to them.

Since its creation less than 50 years ago, Black History Month has been a time to honor and reflect upon the remarkable achievements of the African-American community.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mona Garimella's exceptional work in celebration of Black History Month.

VA04 HIGH SCHOOL BLACK HISTORY MONTH ESSAY CONTEST

(By Mona Garimella)

"Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America." Former U.S. Representative John Lewis once said this, a man who continuously fought for equality and civil rights throughout his lifetime. Lewis's work as an activist and gov-

ernment official made courageous strides in our society that were of the topmost necessity. In a time of pure hate and discrimination against African American people, Lewis led significant protests, such as the iconic Freedom Fighters protests against *Boydton v. Virginia*. He continued his legacy as a leader in multiple nonviolence activist groups and also when he eventually came to Congress. Today, Representative Lewis's lifetime work of "good trouble" represents the necessity for society to continuously fight for what is right and never be afraid to speak up for the greater good, as it is our job as American individuals to hold the government accountable and remain steadfast in our morals so that we can prevent the tragic prejudices in our history from occurring again.

It is hard to stand up for what is right. To speak up and defy social norms is something that takes courage to do, but it is of utmost importance that we do so; one must use their freedom of speech to get in "good trouble" and stand up for what is right. After years of inhumane police brutality against African Americans and the tragic murder of George Floyd in 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement gained a surge of popularity larger than it had ever seen. Individuals of all colors and backgrounds were using their right to protest to create good trouble and be loud. They made it clear that the violence and mistreatment of Black people in our country have been inhumane for centuries now. It was sickening how certain racial prejudices are still present today and even supported by some law enforcement officials. Some news sources viewed these protests as "violent," but the activists continued using their voices because they knew it was the only way people would listen. As seen in Lewis's civil rights work and the Black Lives Matter movement, protests are important to bring the necessary change to our society that is long overdue, particularly in civil rights issues because the country needs to hear the stories of Black people in order to truly understand the systemic issues with our legal systems. Thus, it is only through the continuous use of speech to create "good trouble" that our country can at least somewhat right the wrongs in our legal system, as the people wronged by the system deserve at least that much.

As students, along with using our voices, it is imperative that we remain unified in our efforts so that we can create greater change. If we all come together to share stories and further learn about other perspectives while living as a minority in America, we can truly create substantial change. John Lewis was known to be both a man of action and a man of words. Our words have so much value and power, and we must use language as a collective body of young activists to learn and come together to share these stories. Indeed using one's voice can also be viewed individually, such as through voting. However, the beauty of our democracy is that freedom of speech along with the right to assemble and protest are foundational elements of our country that promote community buy-in. Voting is important, but it is our strength in numbers that can truly move our nation to change, and it is our job as young activists and the next generation to start being more mindful of the stories of those hurt by our nation so that we can come together and push through these issues collectively.

When John Lewis was repeatedly jailed for his protests and civil rights work, he continued to use his voice because he knew our nation still had a long way to go. When Black Lives Matters protesters were criticized for being too loud, the activists continued to lead their efforts because they knew that